



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Tuesday, September 23, 2008

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District of Arizona*

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## **MEXICAN CITIZEN SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON FOR 2003 MURDER**

PHOENIX - Jose Rios Rico, 31, of Sinaloa, Mexico, was sentenced on Tuesday, September 23, 2008, by U.S. District Court Judge James A. Teilborg to life in federal prison plus 55 years for Rios Rico's role in the murder of Angela Pinkerton and other federal drug and firearms charges. Rios Rico is the tenth defendant convicted in the disappearance and murder of Angela Pinkerton on February 26, 2003. Rios Rico will not be eligible for any form of release or parole from prison.

Rios Rico pleaded guilty on September 2, 2008 to all of the charges in the 2006 (second superseding) indictment: Conspiracy to Possess with the Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine, Possession With the Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine, Possession or Use of a Firearm Equipped with a Firearm Silencer in Relation to a Drug Trafficking Crime, Possession or Use of a Firearm in Relation to a Drug Trafficking Crime, Possession or Use of a Firearm in Relation to a Drug Trafficking Offense Resulting in a Death, and Killing a Person While Engaging in a drug offense.

Between July 2002 through March 2003, Rios Rico sold and/or distributed more than 500 grams of methamphetamine with Sabrina Creeger, Jesus Ricardo Rios-Trujillo, Mark Alan Bender, Dennis Lane Spor, Michael Hannebaum, Bradley Williams, Reese Roy Hartnett, Jonathan Atkins, Tom Lata, and Jennifer Bristol. Rios Rico had a .45 caliber pistol, a .38 revolver and a .22 caliber pistol equipped with a silencer that he used during his drug dealing activities.

In the fall of 2002, Rios Rico and his girlfriend, Sabrina Creeger, moved into an apartment in Chandler, Ariz. where Rios Rico began using Angela Pinkerton as a supplier of methamphetamine. Rios Rico lured Pinkerton to Rios Rico's apartment for a drug deal on February 26, 2003, where Rios Rico shot her three times in the head with a .22 caliber handgun equipped with a silencer.

Pinkerton's body was loaded into a tool chest and was later placed in a dumpster by Hartnett and Spor. The next day Hannebaum and Williams removed a blood-stained black leather love seat, carpet and carpet pad from Rios Rico's and Creeger's apartment and dumped the items in the desert on the Gila Indian Reservation. Police were able to recover the carpet, pad and black leather love seat and, although Pinkerton's body was never recovered, DNA test results revealed that the blood on the love seat matched the DNA of Angela Pinkerton.

The disappearance and murder of Angela Pinkerton was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Chandler Police Department with assistance from the Drug Enforcement Administration, the U.S. Marshals Service and the Arizona Department of Public Safety Crime Lab. The prosecution was handled by Keith E. Vercauteren, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-05-0272-001-PHX-JAT  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2008-250(Rios Rico)

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